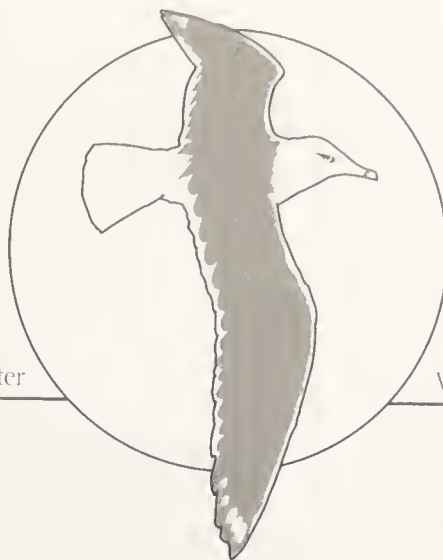


# The Gull



Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 80, No. 8 September 1998

JUL 24 2000

## An Introduction To Birdwatching

**D**o you have friends who seem interested in birds but don't know where to start? Or, have you been receiving the Gull for our conservation news and have been

thinking about getting out into the field and learning more about the creatures that are Golden Gate Audubon's mission to protect and preserve? If so, we have the field trip for you.

Allan Ridley, expert birder and regular Golden Gate Audubon field trip leader, will introduce you to the basics and joys of birdwatching. Allan will give instructions on effective binocular use, basic bird identification, field guide use and selection, local birding destinations and more, as he takes you on a leisurely stroll through Golden Gate Park, starting at the Strybing Arboretum, to Stowe Lake. He will even have a few extra pairs of binoculars on hand. This trip will be

advertised in other media, so there should be many other beginners to keep you company. But don't let the possibility of a big group deter you. In addition to leading trips for Golden Gate Audubon, the Strybing Arboretum Association, and the Sierra Club, Allan teaches an introductory ornithology class, so he's definitely up to the challenge and he is looking forward to welcoming you to the joys of birding.

If you or your friends have ever had an inclination to learn about birdwatching, this is the perfect opportunity for you. Meet Allan on Saturday, September 12, at 8:30 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum in Golden Gate Park (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way) for your introduction to birdwatching!



### Seed Sale

#### See page 7

Our next birdseed sale pick-up will take place on September 25 and 26, 1998. If you wish to order seed, please fill out the seed-order form on page 7 and mail it to us with a check made out to GGAS, with a self-addressed stamped envelope. Orders should be received in the GGAS office by Thursday, September 17. Seed pick-up will take place Friday, September 25, 3-6 pm and Saturday, September 26, 9 am -12 noon at the Golden Gate Audubon Office in Berkeley.

### Belated Thanks

**U**nfortunately, when thanking all who donated to GGAS's Wine & Cheese Tasting, we neglected to include the Acme Bread Company, who without their generous, plentiful, and delicious contribution of bread, the event would not have been nearly as successful. Thanks again to Acme Bread!



# Field Trips Calendar

**G**AS field trips are conducted by experienced birders who wish to share their knowledge and love of birds with others. All trips are free of charge (except for entrance fees that may be charged by regional, state, or national parks) and are open to everyone, regardless of membership in the National Audubon Society or Golden Gate chapter.



**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5,  
LAS GALLINAS SEWER PONDS,  
MARIN.**

8:00 a.m. Leader: Bob Lewis (510) 845-5001. See July Gull for details.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6,  
STRYBING ARBORETUM.**

8 a.m. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-3241. See July Gull for details.

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7  
(LABOR DAY), COASTAL  
SAN FRANCISCO – EARLY FALL  
MIGRANTS.**

7:30 a.m. Leader: Harry Fuller (415) 668-8229. See July Gull for details.

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9,  
MINI-TRIP TO ALAMEDA  
SOUTH SHORE AND  
SURROUNDING AREAS.**

9:30 a.m. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510)-351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman. See July GULL for details.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12,  
COASTAL SAN FRANCISCO.**

8 a.m. Leader: Dan Murphy (415) 564-0074. See July GULL for details.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12,  
INTRODUCTION TO  
BIRDWATCHING,  
GOLDEN GATE PARK.**

Allan Ridley will introduce beginners to the basics and joys of birdwatching. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum in Golden Gate Park (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way). See article elsewhere in this issue of the Gull.

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16,  
GOLDEN GATE PARK,  
COASTAL SAN FRANCISCO.**

A sure cure for those midweek blues, we will begin at Middle Lake in Golden Gate Park and bird this area and the North Lake in search of fall migrants and vagrants. This will be the height of fall migration so anything will be possible. Our success or lack thereof at this location will determine where we go from there. We will finish by noon, possibly earlier (depending upon the birds), so that everyone can head to work hopefully feeling refreshed and happy. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at

the Middle Lake parking lot in Golden Gate Park. Leader: Hugh Cotter (415) 931-7736.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27,  
POINT REYES NATIONAL  
SEASHORE.**

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Bovine Bakery on Rte. 1 in downtown Point Reyes Station, two miles north of Olema. This trip will be to either Abbott's Lagoon or Limantour, to be determined at the Bovine Bakery on the day of the trip. (As of this writing, Abbott's Lagoon has not been good for shorebirds because it received so much water from last winter's heavy rains.) Bring a scope if you have one, lunch and liquids, and wear comfortable walking shoes. Heavy rain cancels. (If in doubt about whether there will be a trip, call.) Leader: Lina Jane Prairie (510) 235-2902.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4,  
STRYBING ARBORETUM.**

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way) for this regular 1st Sunday of the month half-day trip. The Strybing Arboretum is a delightful section of Golden Gate Park, with several micro-habitats attracting a varied array of resident, migrant and vagrant birds. Beginners and all others welcome. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-3241.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11,  
COASTAL SAN FRANCISCO.**

Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot between South and Middle



Lakes (Chain of Lakes) near the 41st Avenue and Lincoln Way entrance to Golden Gate Park. We will begin our birding in the park, then probably head to Lake Merced, followed by various destinations in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in search of warblers, flycatchers and vagrants. Bring lunch and be prepared for cold weather near the coast. Beginners welcome. Leader: Mark Eaton (415) 566-6767.

### **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, MINI TRIP TO EAST BAY SHORELINE.**

Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the large dirt parking lot next to the Seabreeze Market at the intersection of Interstate 80 and University in Berkeley. Take Interstate 80 to the University exit and go west towards the marina. We will bird the nearby mudflats for shorebirds, then probably caravan to Point Isabel and other shoreline spots. Lunch optional. Heavy rain cancels. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Trips marked with a (\$) go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee. Carpooling arrangements will be attempted by leader for trips marked with a (\*). Problems, etc.: If you need a ride or can take a passenger (even if a trip is not marked with an (\*), if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, if you have suggestions for trips, or if you are interested in leading a trip, call Lillian Fujii (510) 236-4167, Field Trips Committee Chair.

## **Neaded: New Editor**

**I**t has been a great two years being editor of the *Gull*. Interesting, challenging, educational, fun.....But, life has bitten another huge chunk out of my free time and I'm afraid I won't have the time it takes to do the newsletter well. So unfortunately, I have to give it up.



And so, GGAS is looking for someone who is interested in picking up where I will leave off as Editor of the *Gull*. It is produced on a monthly basis and comes equipped with many faithful contributors. It's a great and interesting way to be directly involved with your organization. If interested, please contact me, John Gibbons at (415) 621-3899 or the GGAS office at (510) 843-2222.

## **A Touch of Class**

**D**o you have trouble identifying birds you see in your yard, in parks, or at the shore? The Fremont Adult School has a class for you. In it you will observe and learn about the field identification, life styles, and ecology of local birds. Each Tuesday morning the class will visit a different birding spot. The class is designed for both beginning and experienced birders. It is a friendly class in which everybody will help you find and identify the bird. You will not be afraid to ask questions.

It will be taught by Alice Hoch, a bird-watching teacher for the adult school since 1975, a birder for 36 years, and a longtime member of Ohlone Audubon Society.

The class will meet on six Tuesdays from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM, starting Sept. 15th and ending Oct. 20th. Class size is limited, so register early. For more information call the adult school at 791-5841 or Alice at 657-0475.





Parenting techniques among birds are nearly as varied as those among humans. Unlike humans, however, birds' parenting abilities are instinctive products of genetics and years of evolution. Scientists frown but it's easy—and fun—to attach human qualities to animals and birds. Since I'm a writer of sorts, I take the liberty of being both frivolous and scientific.

This year there is a bumper crop of babies in my yard—El Nino again, don't you think? Butterflies, honey and bumble bees, and 55 species of birds (so far) love my English garden (hardy geraniums, lavatera, penstemon, sage, lavender, roses, buddleia) as well as feeders with suet, sunflower and thistle seeds, peanuts, mixed bird seed, two bird baths and a gurgling fountain lure them.

Once the eggs have been laid, parenting can be a long, drawn-out process for some species. Others have it short and easy; while cowbirds simply leave it to some other bird species. After incubating the eggs, hatching begins and then a faster pace of life starts for mom and dad. Precocial birds such as ducks, shorebirds, and quail control the hatching of their eggs so they all emerge at once. That way the whole family can simply walk away from the nest site leaving behind any tell-tale signs of a meal for predators. The young follow along, pecking at everything until they can differentiate between a pebble and a yummy seed.

Some birds (songbirds, flycatchers, woodpeckers, hummingbirds, etc.) are altricial, their babies being

born completely helpless, eyes closed and covered with only scant down. Altricial parents must either eat the egg shells or carry them away from the nest to prevent detection from the hungry. Then the young must be protected from the elements until they develop temperature control, usually within 3–10 days.


The biggest chore facing bird parents is feeding the continually gaping mouths. Nestlings eat an astonishing amount: most young birds need at least half their body weight daily just to keep alive! Whatever their usual adult diet, the baby birds are fed large amounts of protein along with that species' normal diet. One experiment noted that an American robin was fed 14' of earthworms the day it fledged! Nestling passerines don't eat much at one time but digest the food so quickly that they eat almost constantly. Hawks feed their young once an hour, hummingbirds once every 20 minutes, wrens once every 6 minutes and chickadees once every minute. No wonder the parents look so thin and frazzled by lift-off time for the youngsters! There's scarcely time to feed themselves and single parents like hummingbirds must be exhausted.

The parent feeds automatically—the hungriest gets the first "bites", then the others, so the weakest may not survive in less plentiful years. When there is a bumper crop of food, somehow there are more eggs laid and more birds survive. Neat, huh?

The next big step for the young is to fly. Whether they "practice" by wing flapping, or not, instinctively they know how to fly at a

specific age. Some fly right off the nest while others take only short flights. The total period of time when parents feed young is a month for passerines up to 8 months for an albatross. Half of that time (sometimes more) takes place after the young leave the nest. As the fledglings become more physically adept the parents gradually wean the young, bringing them less and less food. Hunger eventually encourages the immature birds to find their own food.

This process took place one early evening when I couldn't ignore the piteous peeping which was coming from a pale yellow ball of fluff in a holly bush. Still unafraid of humans, the lesser goldfinch baby kept up the peeps as it hopped and flopped from shrubs to trees circling the yard. Non-stop insistent calls continued as it finally found its parents contentedly feeding on the thistle sock, ignoring its screaming. Finally the baby hurled itself at the feeder, landing upside down. Peeping continued as it hoped that its parents would feed it. No dice! Suddenly it discovered it was sitting on food! Quiet reigned as it began stuffing itself. In a demonstration of tough love, the parent birds rapidly flew off where the baby stayed, upside down, clinging perilously, until nightfall. A successful "launching" I hope—I can't pick it out of the rest of the crowd of goldfinches.

All over my yard similar scenes are being played out by various bird families—but none so humorously. 



# Birdwatching in Panamá in March 1999

Starring

Resplendent Quetzal, Chestnut-mandibled Toucan,  
Purple-throated Fruitcrow, Three-wattled Bellbird,

Possible guest appearance by  
Bare-necked Umbrellabird

Intrigued? Mystified? Envious? Don't be. Join us!

**WHERE?** Panama, the tropical junction between North and South America

**WHEN?** February 28 – March 9, 1999

**WHO?** You, along with Panamanian bird expert Dr. Lorna Engleman as our guide and GGAS past president Steve Margolin, who will escort the group from San Francisco.

The first part of the trip will focus on the central low-land rainforest around the Panama Canal. Our base for birding there will be the Canopy Tower, a new lodge in a former military radar tower on Semaphore Hill, overlooking the forest canopy. We will explore



the famous Pipeline Road in Soberania National Park, the Ammo Ponds and Plantation Road, hoping to see such species as Slaty-tailed Trogon, Broad-billed Motmot, Grey Potoo, Keel-billed Toucan and Purple-throat-

ed Fruitcrow, plus Antbirds, Hummingbirds and much more. On the Atlantic side, we will stay at the Sierra Llorona lodge and bird the Achote Road, Crested Eagle Road and the areas near Fort Sherman. Here we may see Spot-crowned Barbet, Pied Puffbird, Jet Antbird and Blue Cotinga. The second part of the trip will take us to the mountainous western region near the border with Costa Rica, including two nights at Los Quetzales, to see Resplendent Quetzal, Yellow-billed and Snowy cotingas, Black-bellied Hummingbird, Violet Sabrewing, Fiery-billed Araçari and, with luck, Bare-necked Umbrellabird. Noted birding areas in Western Panama include El Respingo Trail, Batipa, Fortuna and Las Lagunas de Chiriqui.

Cost (land and air), double occupancy, approximately \$2,525. For a detailed itinerary and trip application, please contact Steve Margolin at 530-342-6476.

## Gifts and Bequests

Ellen & Gunther Barth,  
Don Denison, Patricia Fry  
& Maura Ceccoli, Mary  
Ellen Harte, Morton Paley,  
Billie Tobey

### Memorial:

Lucile Willis in memory of  
Richard Duncan  
Beverly Tucker & Kathleen  
Williams in memory of  
Richard Duncan

### Birdathon:

Renate & Jan Smith

### Birds of Honor:

Black Noddy – Stefanie  
Arthur  
Bristle-thighed Curlew –  
Alan Hopkins

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use of general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2550 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull*, as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

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## Learning & Birding

Evening bird classes taught by Joe Morlan and endorsed by the Golden Gate Audubon Society will be starting September 9, 10, and 15. All classes meet 7 – 9:15 p.m. in room 222, Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay St. Free parking is in the school lot off Bay Street on the east side of the building.

The instructor is coauthor of *"Birds of San Francisco and the Bay Area"* and *"Birds of Northern California."* He is also the coordinator of the recorded *"Northern California Birdbox."*

Slides illustrate all lectures, and the text for all classes is *"A Field Guide to Birds of North America,"* second edition, by the National Geographic Society.

**\*Field Ornithology I** meets on Tuesdays. It is an introduction to birds and birding, combining basic field skills with the study of bird ecology, biology, and behavior. Part A (EA101) starts September 15 and ends October 27; Part B (EA105) starts November 3 and ends December 15.

**\*Field Ornithology II** meets on Wednesdays. It is a continuing in-depth study of the identification and status of North American land birds. Part A (EA110) starts September 9 and ends October 21; Part B (EA115) starts October 28 and ends December 16.

**\*Field Ornithology III** meets on Thursdays. It is a continuing study of North American birds including owls, nightjars, swifts, hummingbirds, and woodpeckers. Part A (EA120) starts September 10 and ends October 22; Part B (EA125) starts October 29 and ends December 17.

Optional fieldtrips on weekends may be arranged by the instructor. Please bring binoculars and field guides to class if you have them. Fees are \$90 for each seven-week course. Pre-registration is strongly advised. For further information call (415) 561-1860.

## Help Us With Our Birdathon!

If you read the wonderful articles in the San Francisco Examiner last Spring, you will have known that this year GGAS was matched against four other Audubon Chapters in the nation to see who could see the most species, on a handicapped basis, on Birdathon Day. Well, to our dismay Rainier Audubon from Washington State won the prize. We got national attention on this effort with newspapers and TV stations carrying the story in the various local communities.

We're going to do it again next year but we need to be much more organized if we are to have a really successful

Birdathon. After all, if the handicapping had been done well we think we would have won. Also, our Birdathon's goal is to raise money for our Education programs. We spend over \$2000 a year on bringing Audubon Adventures to over 60 classrooms yearly, and this year we expect to reach over 100 classrooms. At \$35 per class that's a lot of money.

So we need to get serious. We need help! Won't one or two or three of you step forward and volunteer to help organize our Birdathon for next April? It won't be a lot of work. It will be a lot of fun. And you'll be doing a very good thing, indeed.

We look forward to your call. Call us at the GGAS Office at 510-843-2222 or email us at [HYPER-LINK](mailto:HYPER-LINK) mail to: [ggas@compuserve.com](mailto:ggas@compuserve.com). Thanks.

By the way a Birdathon is an event in which on a certain 24 hour period Audubon members try to see as many bird species as possible. Our brave birders saw 191 species this year all in one day. We try to get people to pledge a certain amount of money per species. So if someone pledged 10 cents per species, their pledge would have come to \$19.10. It's fun, it's relatively painless and it's for a great cause.



Birdseed sale pick-up on September 25 and 26

It's that time again. Our wintering birds are back and hungry. If you want to help them out here's your chance. Our next birdseed sale pick-up will take place on September 25 and 26, 1998. If you wish to order seed, please fill out the adjacent seed-order form and mail it to us with a check made out to GGAS, with a self-addressed stamped envelope. Orders should be received in the GGAS office by Thursday, September 17.

Seed pick-up will take place Friday, September 25, 3-6 pm and Saturday, September 26, 9 am -12 Noon at the Golden Gate Audubon Office in Berkeley.

We will have extra seed on hand so if you didn't order enough seed, or forgot to order any seed at all, come on down to the office. We'll have the seed you need!

Most of our native birds such as chickadees, nuthatches, white-crowned sparrows, purple and house finches and woodpeckers, favor sunflower seeds. Goldfinches, pine siskins and chickadees also love Niger (thistle seed). We urge you to consider using these seeds alone. We will, of course, continue to carry our Volkman mixed seed (sunflower and millet) which also attracts doves and English Sparrows.

Our Volkman Premium Wildbird seed and GGAS Own Mixed seeds are the best available. They contain no waste seed and have been cleaned of debris and dust so you get what you pay for. If you have a question about which kind of seed to buy give us a call at the GGAS Office, 510-843-2222.

We're pleased to say that the prices for all our seeds are the same very reasonable prices as for our last sale. Our price for Niger seed (thistle seed for goldfinches and pine siskins) is probably the best in town.

Our Duncraft Feeder is a 16" long tube seed-feeder. We also have some squirrel proof feeders that have a 1" wire mesh surrounding the feeder that keeps out squirrels and larger birds, letting in only our songbirds and sparrows. As always, we also have a variety of hummingbird feeders.

We are also offering GGAS hats. These hats are black, baseball-style caps adorned with our now famous GGAS logo. They really are quite lovely and you'll enjoy wearing them. These hats cost \$15. Please add \$2 for postage and handling if you want us to mail them to you.

We also have Golden Gate Audubon Snowy Plover T-shirts at the very reasonable cost of \$10 (\$2 shipping).

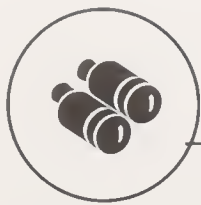
Remember, your purchases provide an important source of income to GGAS, allowing us to continue our conservation, education and field-trip activities. We look forward to seeing you on seed sale day.

GGAS BIRD SEED AND FEEDER SALE  
ORDER AND PREPAY BY SEPTEMBER 17, 1998  
PICK UP FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE (DAY) \_\_\_\_\_ (EVENING) \_\_\_\_\_

| SEED  | QUANTITY | AMOUNT  |
|---|----------|---------|
| GGAS' OWN MIX   | 20 lbs.  | \$ 9.00 |
| Contains only red and white millet and black oil sunflower seed           | 50 lbs.  | \$19.50 |
| VOLKMAN PREMIUM   | 20 lbs.  | \$ 8.50 |
| WILD BIRD SEED  | 50 lbs.  | \$18.50 |
| Composed of only red and white millet - no sunflower seeds (no squirrels) |          |         |
| BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED  | 25 lbs.  | \$13.00 |
|   | 50 lbs.  | \$25.00 |
| BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER CHIPS   | 25 lbs.  | \$24.00 |
| (No waste!)   |          |         |
| NIGER (THISTLE) SEED  | 5 lbs.   | \$8.00  |
| FEEDERS   |          |         |
| DUNCRAFT SEED FEEDER 16"  | \$28.00  |         |
| THISTLE FEEDER  | \$10.00  |         |
| SQUIRREL PROOF FEEDER   | \$46.16  |         |
| HUMMINGBIRD (window)  | \$10.00  |         |
| HUMMZINGER (saucer style)   | \$15.50  |         |
| HUMMINGBIRD (16 oz. bottle)   | \$12.00  |         |
| SUET CAGE (2" x 5" x 5")  | \$ 5.50  |         |
| SUET CAKE (11.75 oz.)   | \$ 2.75  |         |
| GGAS Hat  | \$15.00  |         |
| GGAS T-shirt  | \$10.00  |         |

|   |                             |  |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
|   | SUB-TOTAL                   |  |
| Be sure to include your check with a stamped and self-addressed envelope. | 8.25% SALES TAX             |  |
|   | TOTAL                       |  |
| Pick up in Berkeley at the GGAS office                                    | CONTRIBUTION TO GGAS        |  |
|   | POSTAGE FOR HATS & T-SHIRTS |  |
|   | GRAND TOTAL                 |  |



May 29 - July 17, 1998

The period covered by this report certainly represented a rare bird bonanza! In the Northern California counties, there were sightings of a grand total of 14 species (4 non-passerine and 10 passerine) included on the California Bird Records Committee Review List. These observations must represent some kind of record and it is tempting to think of another El Nino-related phenomenon.

### Albatross to Skimmers

A Monterey Bay, MTY, pelagic trip June 3 recorded 2-3 Laysan Albatross (JM), and another was sighted on a July 11 trip to the Cordell Banks (RS). A single Black-footed Albatross was seen off Pigeon Pt., SM, May 29 (BM)

and the aforementioned MTY bay trip noted 113 of this species (DLSh), while there were 110-150 observed on the Cordell Banks trip (RS). At Cordell Banks, 300 Northern Fulmars were also recorded (RS). Two Pink-footed Shearwaters were off Pigeon Pt., SM, May 29 (BM), 50 were found on the June 3 MTY pelagic trip (DLSh), and 60 on the Cordell Banks trip that also yielded 40 Sooty Shearwaters and the first Marin County record of the **Manx Shearwater** (RS). In addition, the Cordell Banks trip reported 8-12 Fork-tailed Storm Petrels, a Leach's Storm Petrel, and 5 Ashy Storm Petrels (RS).

A **Masked Booby**, extremely rare in the state, normally occurring in the waters around Baja CA, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Atlantic, was present for several weeks at Ano Nuevo Island, SM, beginning June 19 and continuing at least until July 13 (PM, fide GS, MOB). This bird represents approximately the 10th state record for the species. A **Brown Booby** of the *brewsteri* or Eastern Pacific, race was seen on the rocks near the PRNS, MRN, lighthouse June 7 (JHu, RH), and sighted again June 11 (JH). This visitation is the most recent of several by this species to Northern CA this year. A Magnificent Frigatebird flew over Tomales Bay, MRN, July 3 (SA fide RS).

The Little Blue Heron continued at Alviso, SCL, May 29 (BM). A male Harlequin Duck maintained his residency at Brooks Island, CC, through at least June 4

(SG). An Oldsquaw was sighted near the Dumbarton Bridge, SM, June 28 (RT). An additional report of the Asian **Gray-tailed Tattler**, first seen at PRNS on May 25 was an observation off Bodega, SON, May 30 (RR), and was probably the same bird. As noted previously, there is only one prior state record of this species, from LA County (Small, 1994), and we will have to wait for the CBRC to rule on this one. There was a Semipalmated Sandpiper at the Albany Mudflats, ALA, July 11 (BS), and an early harbinger of the fall migration was the first Western Sandpiper of the season observed near Hwy. 84, SM, June 20 (RT).

One Parasitic Jaeger was seen off Pigeon Pt., SM, May 29 (BM). Pescadero Creek, SM, played host to a Laughing Gull June 5-7 (BM), a first or second county record. There were 8-9 Franklin's Gulls at CCRS, SCL, June 9 (BR), 10 were seen there June 11 (SR), and one was observed on the Monterey pelagic trip June 3 (JM). Another Franklin's Gull flew over Charleston Slough, SCL, June 6 (BM), there were two on Mono L., MNO, June 12 (PM), and another single flyover was at the Alviso Marina, SCL, June 29 (ST). Eleven or more Sabine's Gulls were reported on the June 3 Monterey Bay pelagic trip (JM, DLSh), and another at Coyote Pt., SM, was observed from June 20 through at least July 10 (RT, MOB). The July 11 Cordell Banks trip recorded another two individuals of this species (RS).

Elegant Terns were present in

**Abbreviations for Observers:** SA, Scott Anderson; KB, Ken Burton; MOB, Many Observers; LC, Luke Cole; CC, Chris Corben; HC, Hugh Cotter; SD, Steve Deasy; ME, Mark Eaton; AE, Al Eisner; JE, Joel Ellis; MF, Mike Feighner; DE, Dan Froelich; SG, Steve Glover; KH, Keith Hansen; RH, Roger Harshaw; RHe, Ray Hedsbeth; KHi, Kevin Hints; JH, Joel Hornstein; LH, Lisa Hug; JHu, Joan Humphrey; RK, Richard Kuehn; KK, Keith Kwan; BL, Bill Lenarz; CL, Cindy Lieurance; LL, Leslie Lieurance; BM, Bert McKee; PM, Peter Metropulos; JM, Joe Morlan; DM, Dan Murphy; CN, Christy Nelson; DN, David Nelson; DnN, Dan Nelson; DP, Debbie Parker; BR, Bob Reiling; JR, Joost Romeo; SR, Steve Rottenborn; SRv, Steve Rovell; RR, Ruth Rudecell; DS, Doug Shaw; DLSh, Debra Love Shearwater; BS, Bo Soderstrom; RS, Rich Stallcup; GS, Gary Strachen; ES, Emilie Strauss; ST, Scott Terrill; RT, Ron Thorn; AW, Alan White; JW, Jerry White; AWi, Adam Winer; RW, Roger Wolf

**Abbreviations for Counties and Others:** ALA, Alameda; ALP, Alpine; AMSP, Andrew Molera State Park; BSOL, Big Sur Ornithology Lab; CC, Contra Costa; CCRS, Coyote Creek Riparian Station; CBRC, California Bird Records Committee; INY, Inyo; MRN, Marin; MEN, Mendocino; MNO, Mono; MTY, Monterey; MPRBA, Monterey Peninsula Rare Bird Alert; PLA, Placer; PRNS, Point Reyes National Seashore; SBT, San Benito; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SCL, Santa Clara; SON, Sonoma.





fairly high numbers for the period, including 16 on the Great Highway, SF, May 29 (DN), 125 at Brooks Island, CC, June 4 (SG), 4 at the Garcia River mouth, MEN, May 29 (JW) and 4 more at Coyote Pt. Park, SM, July 1 (AE). Some observers have speculated that poor nesting success in their Southern CA breeding grounds this season may account for their present abundance in Northern CA. One Common Tern was on the Great Highway, SF, May 29 (DN). For the sixth year in a row, an alternate-plumaged Arctic Tern, almost surely the same individual, has summered at Johnson's Landing at the Hayward Regional Shoreline, ALA, reported from June 21 up until at least July 11 (KHi, MOB).

There were many reports of Least Terns from several locations, including Alameda, Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, and San Mateo counties, with the most interesting one being the appearance of more than 17 birds at Coyote Pt. Yacht Club, SM, June 30 (RT). Black Skimmers continued in SCL county, with 5 near Shoreline Lake June 6 (BM). Another two were at Elkhorn Slough, MTY, June 4 (MPRBA). Four individuals, including at

least one breeding pair with two chicks, were also found at the Hayward Regional Shoreline, ALA, from June 21 to at least July 11 (KHi, MOB).

### Nighthawks to Flycatchers

Two Lesser Nighthawks were seen at PRNS, MRN, June 13 (RS). Other out-of-normal range birds were two Lesser Nighthawks at PRNS, MRN, June 13 (RS) and two others at Clifton Court Forebay, CC, July 1 (SG), as well as a Broad tailed Hummingbird at Tom's Place, MNO, July 6 (RS).

The current observation period contained three CBRC species of Tyrannidae. The first was an **Eastern Wood Pewee** (*Contopus virens*) at Bodega Bay, SON, June 3 (AW). This species, normally distributed over the Eastern half of the U.S., is exceedingly rare in the state, and distinguishable in the field from its sister species, the Western Wood Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*), by its call. A singing individual was again identified at the PRNS, MRN, Lighthouse June 22-23 (JM, RS, DS). Yet a third singer of this species was found at Mono Co. Pk., MNO, July 6 and 12 (RS, AWi). The Eastern Wood Pewee's song, recorded by Mark Eaton, is found on Joe Morlan's web site. The second rare flycatcher was a **Sulphur-Bellied Flycatcher** seen near Gazos Creek Road, SM, June 14-15 (BM, DS), a first county record. Amazingly, another individual of this tropical species was spotted at Sea Ranch, SON, on June 14

(RK). Previous records have all occurred in the fall (Small, 1994). The third unusual "tyrant" to turn up was a likely **Greater Pewee** (*Contopus pertinax*) photographed at the Farallones June 18 (fide KH). According to Small, 1994, this species is an extremely rare winter visitant, and exceedingly rare in Northern California. Hopefully this interesting report will be submitted to the CBRC for review.

Slightly more mundane but still unusual flycatchers were a Least Flycatcher spotted May 31 at PRNS, MRN (JM), another June 6 at the Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN, (DF), and a third individual near Mono Lake Co. Pk., MNO, June 12 (PM). A single Cassin's Kingbird, extremely rare in the Big Sur area, was noted May 30 at AMSP, MTY, (MPRBA), and another was seen at San Felipe Rd. East of Gilroy, SCL (JM). An Eastern Kingbird was observed June 6-8 at various PRNS, MRN, locations (DS, KB, KH), with another individual found at the Redwood Shores Sewage Treatment Plant, SM, June 15 (RT). Finally, A Scissor-Tailed Flycatcher was seen on U.S. 395 near Bishop, MNO, June 5 (DP fide ES). This species, a rare spring transient, was recently removed from the California Review Species list.

### Vireos to Orioles

Continuing with the impressive CBRC species list for the period, a **Yellow-throated Vireo** was sighted at the PRNS,

*Continued on page 10*

Continued from page 9

MRN, Lighthouse (RS). This Eastern U.S. species is rarely seen in Northern California, but has visited the outer PRNS area regularly in recent years. A singing **Philadelphia Vireo** was at Parker Ck., MNO, June 21 (ES). Almost all previous reports of this rare transient have occurred in the fall (Small, 1994). At least 9 reports of Single Red-eyed Vireos were received from Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, and Sonoma counties as well as the Farallones over the period.

A Pinyon Jay, usually not found west of the Great Basin, was seen on the west slope of the Carson Pass, ALP, June 1 (SD). A second recorded nest of the Yellow-billed Magpie in Contra Costa County was located June 5 (SG). A Mountain Bluebird, uncommon near to the coast in summer was seen at PRNS, MRN, June 24 (fide KH). A **Gray Catbird** was found June 20 near the Carmel R. mouth, MTY (CN). Most of these very rare transients have occurred in the fall (Small, 1994). A vagrant Brown Thrasher was sighted on the Farallones around the beginning of June (KH).

Many reports of vagrant Wood Warblers were received this period, with three CBRC species of Parulidae represented. Both the "albilora" **Yellow-throated Warbler** and the **Worm-eating Warbler** are Eastern to Southeastern U.S. species and very rare spring transients. The **Mourning Warbler**, which normally breeds in Canada and the Northeastern U.S., averages about

one record per spring migration season (Small, 1994). The locations and dates of these and other Wood Warbler sightings are included on the accompanying chart.

Individual Summer Tanagers visited Miner Hole Road, MEN, May 30 (RHe), Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN, June 6 (LL), the Farallones around June 1 and again on June 18 (fide KH), Gazos Creek Rd., SM, June 19 (RW), and San Carlos, SM, June 20 (RT). A **Scarlet Tanager** a bird of the Eastern U.S., and an extremely rare coastal transient in Northern California, was at PRNS, MRN, June 1 (RS). A Clay-colored Sparrow was at the PRNS, MRN, Lighthouse May 31 (RS fide KH), a second report came from the Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN, June 5 (DF), and a third was at the Farallones around June 1 (KH). There was also a White-throated Sparrow at the Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN, June 1 and 7 (DS, JM), and a later sighting occurred at the PRNS, MRN, Lighthouse June 21 (CL). Reports of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks came from several locations, including 11 from PRNS, MRN, and 6 others from Monterey, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Sonoma counties, and the Farallones.

An Indigo Bunting found at Piper Slough, CC, May 30 remained until at least July 11 (SG, MF, KK). Other individuals were seen at Lincoln Park, SF, May 29 (HC), at Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN, June 5 (KH), at the Fish Slough, MNO, June 15 (PM), and at Michigan Bluff, PLA, June 20 (DS). A female Dickcissel was at

the PRNS, MRN, Lighthouse June 12 and 13 (JM, RS). At least 25 Great-tailed Grackles were reported, with a high count of 12 at Folsom Lake, PLA, June 5-6 (SG, MF) and the remainder found over Inyo, Monterey, Placer, and Santa Clara counties. Unusual for summer was an Orchard Oriole June 2-3 at Owl Canyon, Bodega Bay, SON (DnN), and a second observation at PRNS, MRN, June 18 (JM).

Correction: The June column incorrectly credited another bird-er with John Sterling's observation of the Lesser Nighthawks at Clifton Court Forebay Apr. 28. My apologies to John.

## Alcatraz Bird Census

Volunteers are needed to conduct bird counts and identifications on Alcatraz Island, an important site for wintering and migratory birds. The project lasts from September through February, with volunteers coming out one morning every two weeks. Prior birding experience is helpful, but not required. Training will be provided. For more information, please call Brett Carre at (650) 355-6203.



## A Heartfelt Thanks and Good-bye

What do you say to someone who has been our Christmas Bird Count Compiler (coordinator), our Corresponding Secretary and our Treasurer and Earthshare representative over the last ten years or so?

First you say "Don't go!" When that doesn't work you can only say thanks and we'll miss you.

Kay Loughman has been all of the above, which also means that she has also been a GGAS Board Member for most of that time. If you count it up, it means lots and lots of hours spent on behalf of GGAS. Well, we who have worked with Kay have enjoyed all those hours and Kay has helped make them a pleasure.

It's folks like Kay who make GGAS the successful Audubon chapter that it is.

And what do you say when your Education Chairperson decides to get an advanced degree. You wish her luck and wish it weren't so. Louise Harm has been the Education Chair for two years and what a difference she has made. She started a family bird trip program on weekends and has worked to establish a group of trip leaders for children programs. We'll miss Louise but hope and expect her to come back with her wonderful energy once she has acquired her new degree with flying colors.

### Warbler sightings

#### Tennessee Warbler

|         |                           |       |
|---------|---------------------------|-------|
| May 31  | AMSP, MTY                 | MPRBA |
| May 31  | PRNS Lighthouse, MRN      | JM    |
| May 31  | Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN     | JM    |
| June 1  | Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN  | RS    |
| June 1  | (2) Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN | BL    |
| June 1  | Farallones                | KH    |
| June 6  | Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN     | LL    |
| June 9  | PRNS Lighthouse, MRN      | DS    |
| July 16 | AMSP, MTY                 | CN    |

#### Northern Parula

|            |                              |       |
|------------|------------------------------|-------|
| May 31     | AMSP, MTY                    | MPRBA |
| May 31     | (1-2) PRNS Lighthouse, MRN   | JM    |
| June 7     | AMSP, MTY                    | JM    |
| June 9     | PRNS Lighthouse, MRN         | RS    |
| June 12    | Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN       | DF    |
| June 13    | (2) BSOL, MTY                | MPRBA |
| June 25,26 | (2) AMSP, MTY                | JM    |
| July 7     | Nesting confirmed, AMSP, MTY | CN    |

#### Magnolia Warbler

|         |                             |     |
|---------|-----------------------------|-----|
| June 3  | Nunes Ranch, PRN, MRN       | RS  |
| June 11 | Owl Canyon, Bodega Bay, SON | DnN |

#### Chestnut-sided Warbler

|          |                                |            |
|----------|--------------------------------|------------|
| June 1   | Farallones                     | KH         |
| June 6,7 | Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN         | RS, KB     |
| June 7   | Parker Ck. Diversion Pond, MON | JE fide ES |
| June 13  | Road Forks Pool, PRNS, MRNRS   |            |
| June 15  | Fish Slough Pond, MON          | DP         |
| June 22  | Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN       | JM         |
| June 24  | Banded at BSOL, MTY            | MPRBA      |

#### Cape May Warbler

|             |           |    |
|-------------|-----------|----|
| June 22, 23 | PRNS, MRN | LH |
|-------------|-----------|----|

#### Black-throated Green Warbler

|         |                                |    |
|---------|--------------------------------|----|
| June 21 | near Hastings Dr., Belmont, SM | RT |
|---------|--------------------------------|----|

#### Yellow-throated Warbler

|        |                        |    |
|--------|------------------------|----|
| June 9 | Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN | RS |
|--------|------------------------|----|

#### Palm Warbler

|        |                    |    |
|--------|--------------------|----|
| June 6 | Shoreline Lk., SCL | BM |
|--------|--------------------|----|

#### Bay-breasted Warbler

|        |                        |            |
|--------|------------------------|------------|
| May 31 | Palo Marin, MRN        | RS fide KH |
| May 31 | Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN | JM         |

#### Blackpoll Warbler

|          |                        |            |
|----------|------------------------|------------|
| May 31   | PRNS Lighthouse, MRN   | RS fide KH |
| June 1   | Farallones             | KH         |
| June 6   | Shoreline Lake, SCL    | BM         |
| June 7,9 | Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN | RS         |
| June 18  | Farallones             | fide KH    |

#### Black-and-White Warbler

|         |                             |         |
|---------|-----------------------------|---------|
| June 8  | Jewel Lake, Tilden Park, CC | ES      |
| June 13 | SE Farallones               | fide KH |
| June 20 | Mt. Davidson, SF            | LC, JR  |

#### American Redstart

|           |                        |        |
|-----------|------------------------|--------|
| May 31    | AMSP, MTY              | MPRBA  |
| June 1    | New Willows, PRNS, MRN | RS     |
| June 3,10 | East Wash, SF, SF      | ME, HC |
| June 5    | Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN | KH     |
| June 6    | Fish docks, PRNS, MRN  | KB     |
| June 13   | Bodega Bay, SON        | DnN    |

#### Prothonotary Warbler

|        |                           |    |
|--------|---------------------------|----|
| May 31 | Banded at Palo Marin, MRN | KH |
|--------|---------------------------|----|

#### Worm-eating Warbler

|        |                       |    |
|--------|-----------------------|----|
| June 7 | Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN | RS |
|--------|-----------------------|----|

#### Ovenbird

|                    |                                   |         |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| June 1             | Farallones                        | KH      |
| June 1-2, 13,21,24 | PRNS Lighthouse, MRNRS, JM, BL CL | fide KH |
| June 3             | Fast Wash, SF, SF                 | ME      |
| June 5             | Table Mt., SCL                    | SR      |
| June 6,19,20       | Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN             | JM, RS  |

#### Mourning Warbler

|         |            |         |
|---------|------------|---------|
| June 13 | Farallones | fide KH |
|---------|------------|---------|

#### Hooded Warbler

|         |                           |            |
|---------|---------------------------|------------|
| June 7  | Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN     | RS         |
| June 15 | near Gazos Creek, Rd., SM | BM         |
| June 20 | Mt. Davidson, SF          | HC, ME, DM |

#### Canada Warbler

|         |                               |         |
|---------|-------------------------------|---------|
| June 21 | Gualala Visitors' Center, SON | CC      |
| June 27 | Ano Nuevo St. Pk., SM         | PM      |
| June 26 | Banded at Palo Marin, MRN     | fide KH |



# September Meeting

## East Bay Trails:

Outdoor Adventures in Alameda  
and Contra Costa Counties

David Weintraub, author of the newly released *East Bay Trails*, will be joining us for our September program to discuss what the East Bay wilderness has to offer, its many trails, and illustrate its beauty with accompanying slides.



Thursday, September 17, 1998

7:30 p.m.

Northbrae Community Church

941 The Alameda, Berkeley

He began his year-long hiking exploration of the East Bay in the spring of 1996, visiting each trail described in the book at least once, with the photography requiring many more outings. The book includes over 50 selected trips in 31 parks that travel the East Bay and shorelines. There are also maps, photos, and historical notes, as well as a list of "favorite hikes" and descriptions of plants and animals of the area.

What better way to become better acquainted with this wonderful area than to join us and David Weintraub at the next meeting?



### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The Gull*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.

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